



Living Healthy Working Well

Balancing Home And Work

Is your laundry basket as full as your “in” basket? Many of us today are struggling to balance full-time jobs with full-time responsibilities at home. In an increasingly complex world, it’s becoming even more important to maintain a balance in our lives. This newsletter looks at ways to find balance in your life and make time to do the things you enjoy most.

How Can You Tell If Your Life Is Out Of Balance?

If your life is out of balance you may feel overwhelmed, find it hard to concentrate, and feel like you’re not as creative as you used to be. You may have trouble sleeping and may be overeating or not eating enough. You’re probably experiencing a whole range of emotions including anger, sadness, guilt, fear, frustration, resentment, hurt and loneliness. Moreover, you may feel powerless and suffer from low self-esteem or self-confidence.

What Is A Good Balance?

Achieving balance means dedicating the most time and energy possible to the things in your life that are important to you. There’s no set formula for living a balanced life — some people find

a 60-hour work week fulfilling, while others want to spend less time at work and more with family or friends.

Your priorities may change based on what phase of life you’re in. If you’ve recently finished college, you may be quite content working long hours. If you have young children, spending time at home is likely a higher priority for you. It’s important to stand back and assess your situation before determining whether you want to change the balance in your life. Start out by asking yourself these questions:

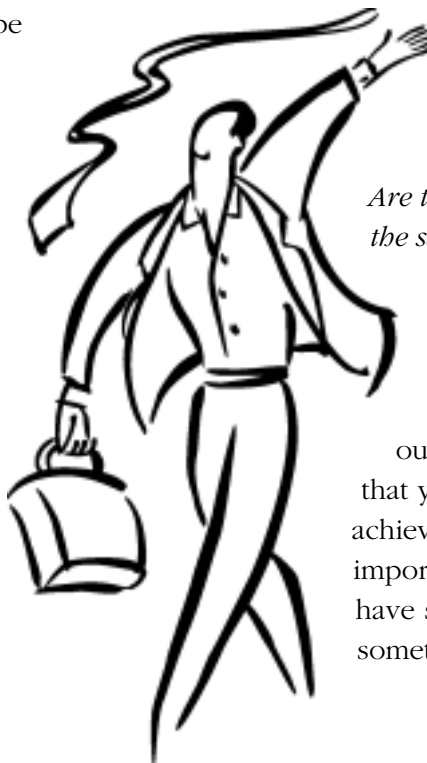
Is my life right now the way I want it to be?

If not, what is wrong with it?

Is my current situation temporary?

What can I change to make my life more fulfilling and enjoyable?

Are the rewards of making these changes worth the sacrifices?



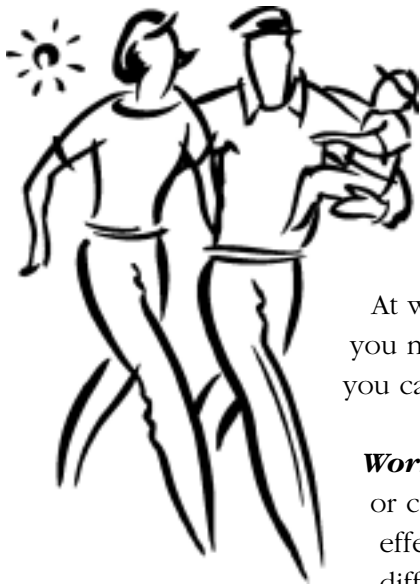
Depending on how you answer the questions, you may decide that the benefits of your current situation outweigh the costs. Or you may determine that you need to make some changes to achieve the balance you seek. The most important thing is realizing when your priorities have shifted too far in one direction, and doing something about it.

How Do I Get Back On Track?

If you've determined that you need to make some changes to the balance in your life, the following guidelines can help you get on the right track.

Feel good about yourself. Establish realistic expectations. Ease up on yourself when possible. Take stock of all the good things, big and small, that you do at work and at home. Feeling good about yourself is key to a balanced lifestyle.

Prioritize to make the most out of your time. Determine what tasks you need to accomplish and rank them according to importance. Keep in mind your own needs, as well as those of loved ones. If you must work on a Saturday, plan a recreational activity with your family or friends for Sunday.



Share responsibilities. Sharing responsibilities is a good way for everyone to find balance. Start by determining what tasks need to be done. Next, decide who might be best at doing particular tasks as well as who likes or dislikes certain tasks.

At work (and at home), ask for help when you need it, and reach out to others when you can be of help.

Work smarter, not harder. Combining or consolidating tasks is more efficient and effective than trying to work on a million different tasks in a haphazard manner.

Involve others, including children, in the planning and decision-making process. The time saved, along with the lowered levels of stress, will help you keep your life in balance.

Remember . . .

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to you and your eligible dependents. EAP counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to discuss your concerns and provide confidential assistance at no cost to you. As part of your EAP, you now have access to MagellanAssist. Visit today at <http://www.dpa.ca.gov/benefits/other/eap/Assist.shtm>

Shifting Gears Between Work And Home

Making an appropriate transition from work to home is good for you and your family, and it can help you more completely enjoy all aspects of your life. The following ideas can help give you the “me” time you need to make the shift from work mode to home life.

- Get off the bus or train earlier than you have to, and walk the rest of the way home.
- Exercise for 15 to 30 minutes: Run, walk or stretch, either alone or with family members.
- When you get home in the evening take a 15-minute bath or shower.
- Change from work clothes into comfortable non-work clothes that help you relax.
- Sit on the couch for 15 to 30 minutes, issuing an open invitation to family members to tell you their news while you're relaxing. This activity tends to calm keyed up children, too.
- Listen to music while you look at the mail.
- Put out a few quick and easy appetizers right away so you can relax and serve dinner later.
- Meditate for 15 minutes.